

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

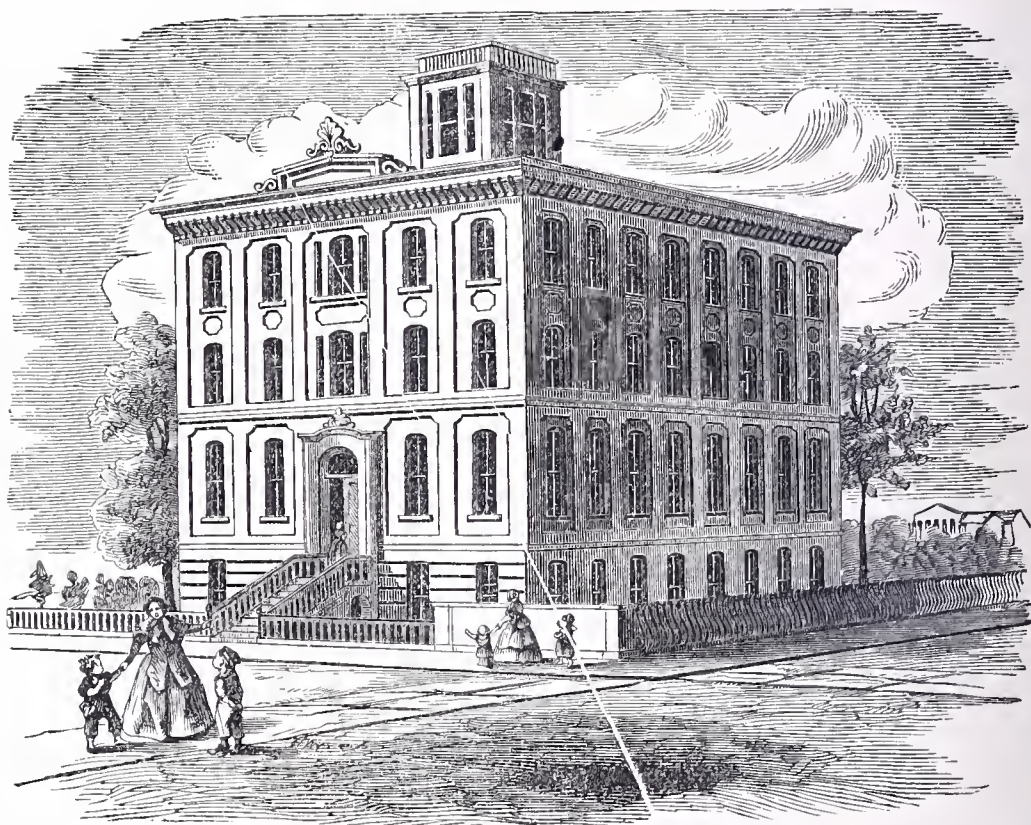
Gov. HENRY M. HOYT,

DELIVERED AT

HARRISBURG, PA., JANUARY 21, 1879.

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HARRISBURG:  
LANE S. HART, STATE PRINTER.  
1879.



NORTHERN HOME FOR FRIENDLESS CHILDREN.

CORNER OF BROWN AND TWENTY-THIRD STREETS.

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*Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives, and Fellow-Citizens :*

We are associated, to-day, in the observance of a time honored custom. To you, the occasion which convenes us is mainly ceremonial in its character. And yet not only to you who are gathered immediately within the sound of my voice, but to all the citizens of the State it is an occasion of serious import. You and they are to witness a change in the Chief Magistracy of your Commonwealth. To myself, it is more significant. While I gratefully accept my share of the pleasure incident to a pageant like this, it is suggestive of delicate duties and grave responsibilities. Elected to be Chief Magistrate of the State, my official life begins here and now.

You have witnessed in my assumption of the oath of office, a sacred appeal to Almighty God, and a solemn pledge of fidelity in the discharge of my official obligations. "The Supreme Executive power shall be vested in the Governor, who shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." This is the language of our State Constitution. It briefly, simply, and adequately defines my principal duty. I fully understand these words—I fully comprehend the oath I have just taken. The people of Pennsylvania expect me to keep that oath. By the help of their prayers, and by the favor of Divine Providence, I expect to keep it.

It will be a common pleasure to us, to be exempted from giving special attention, at this time, to matters of public business. The conspicuous ability, and the long and varied experience of my distinguished predecessor, has permitted nothing to escape his attention which concerned the public good, or was of sufficient importance to be commended to the special action of the General Assembly, or which might challenge the consideration of the people. His last annual message is a document, at once so judicious, timely, and comprehensive in its review of public affairs and its recommendations, as to relieve me, for the present, from all care in respect to

that branch of the executive duty. I may, therefore, regard myself as at liberty to glance at some topics, not inappropriate to this occasion, in which all good citizens feel a deep concern.

The question uppermost in the mind of the country relates to the revival of business. The last five years will be memorable in our national history as a period of industrial depression, and consequent social distress. These five years have disclosed the causes of our troubles, and their experience should lead us up to the true methods of recovery. They will be found to lie in the moral forces of society, and not in legislative enactments or executive interference. I shall offer you no discourse upon the financial theories which have vexed us during these years. We have come, with great unanimity, to recognize the actual facts which lie at the bottom of this whole subject. A generation of younger business men had come upon the stage at a period of excitement, following the war, and of speculation, fairly reaching the degree of gambling. The vastly expanded credit, which men gave, one to another, in all forms of business, the result of an inflated currency, led to unnatural values, as measured in such currency. The temptations for contracting debts were great, and not easily resisted. We spent more than we earned; we forgot that "the extravagance of the rich was not the gain of the poor"—"that profusion and waste were not for the good of trade"—and that everything consumed and destroyed was so much lost in the labor which had produced it. Circulating capital was locked up in fixed property. The wages-fund was impaired. We abandoned the maxims of experience and the simplest truths in political economy. We measured values by a standard not common to the civilized world with whom we were in daily and necessary commercial intercourse. We failed to remember that the issue of paper money, whether greenbacks, national bank notes, bills of exchange, or checks, did not add a dollar to the wealth of the nation, and that while indispensable as a circulating medium, it could only have a representative value. We did not advert sufficiently to the present physical and financial fact, that by the tacit agreement of the nations, the precious metals are the only standard of value, the only "current money with the merchant." We did not seem to know that the instincts of a practical, shrewd, and enterprising nation of business men must finally and forever reject the use of an irredeemable currency. At the last, pay day came, as it always must, and bankruptcy came with it, as it always will under like causes. Our capacity to consume was destroyed. The producer was without buyers for his merchandise. Debtor and creditor alike had to pause for the day of settlement. A system of economy and saving was forced upon us, and it was the one process to restore us. It cost us a hard struggle, self-denial and suffering, but the result was health, moral and financial. The virtues of sobriety

and industry, renewed in practice, give us discipline and strength. They widened and deepened our manhood and womanhood. Discarding the cheap devices of mere theorists, the dishonest proposals of mere agitators, and the charlatanism of a political economy which undertook to teach us how to create wealth without labor, we are now ready to go forward. Henceforth we are to produce and exchange actual things, and not gamble in merely fictitious values. Resumption has taken place, confidence is restored, and business will flow in healthy channels so long as values are stable and their measure honest. Pennsylvania is an empire in its resources, and her people in the past have developed and used them only by the virtues of labor and economy. For the future we must accept the same conditions.

It is possible, that, within our borders, there may be required some readjustment of our population to the centers of industry—some redistribution of labor and capital. Your Bureau of Labor and Statistics, when adequately organized and administered, will furnish abundant data upon which the intelligence of the people will act.

I desire here to bespeak the freest and fullest coöperation of the people with their chief magistrate. It is equally their privilege and their duty to make their interests and their wishes known through their legislative representatives, by committee, by writing, or by direct personal interview with the executive. Such careful, special, intelligent, unreserved expression upon the part of the people, would enable both the legislative and executive branches of their government to act with a clearer appreciation of their necessities. I speak now for myself alone, but I am at the same time confident that I express the sentiments of every gentleman who is officially related to the State administration.

We are renewing, in part, the *personnel* of our State government, at a period of momentous interest in our national affairs. The one great question yet to be solved, is:—Shall government by the ballot be maintained in this country, with equal political rights for all legal voters? Pennsylvania's attitude on that question is known wherever her name is known. That she will insist on the enforcement of the authority of the national Constitution, in every State of the national Union, is as certain as that her mountain peaks point toward heaven, and her rivers roll to the sea. Under no circumstances can she ever recede from this position. Strong in herself, stronger in virtue of the constitutional relationship to her sister States, she will be magnanimous, conciliating, and patient. But justice, in the end, must, with her, be paramount. Upon this high ground she will demand that the provisions of a Constitution made for all, shall be conformed to by all. This question goes not only to her political convictions, to her estimate of the worth of our civilization, but to the consciences of her

population. Pennsylvania bows in unalterable devotion to the grand ideas of the supremacy, perpetuity, and glory of the nation.

I have detained you, fellow-citizens, beyond my intention, and will, therefore, claim your indulgence but a moment longer for a personal allusion. I should be guilty of insincerity if I affected indifference to the honor of the trust your suffrages have confided to me. I am incapable of expressing my heartfelt sense of its value, or the strength of my purpose to prove that it has not been misplaced. So much, in brief, to those to whom I directly owe my election. One word to my fellow-citizens who preferred and supported my honorable competitors. It is worthy of a free people that they bear themselves with propriety and self-control, through the contentions and excitements of a general election. It is gratifying to myself, and doubtless equally so to all who were actively engaged in the late canvass, that there was so little manifestation of bitterness. The great debate was conducted with calmness, as it was also with earnestness. For the kindness and courtesy extended to me by my political adversaries, I have to say that if they had voted for me from the same sense of duty which gave their ballots to my opponents, I could not be more firmly resolved than I am, to be impartial and faithful in discharging the obligations I owe to them as Chief Executive of the Commonwealth. My political views and convictions will and ought, unquestionably, to influence and shape some of my official recommendations; but in protecting the constitutional and legal rights of the citizen, no party distinction can ever for one moment be recognized.

In conclusion, fellow-citizens, permit me to remind you of the individual responsibility of each citizen, for the aggregate well-being of the community. Each of us owes the highest measure of fidelity to the justice, the power, and the right embodied in the State. Under the peace and protection it secures, all our traffic is prosecuted and all our prosperity is shielded. Under it, the social principle is allowed scope to found asylums, lodges, seminaries, and churches, and to perfect the Commonwealth itself. There can be no right citizenship without an intelligent understanding of the principles which the government organizes, and of the ideas which it represents.

Each citizen should be able on his own information and not depending on any interested jobber or meddler to tell when there is a departure from rectitude, where a wrong tendency sets in, and where a peril confronts us.

It is a cardinal principle underlying the political creeds of all self governing people, which affirms each citizen to be as fully responsible for the welfare of the State, as he is for his own personal safety and happiness. Private citizen and magistrate are equally under this fundamental law of the Republic.

As you have heard me bound by an oath to obey the laws of the Commonwealth, so have I, in turn, the correlative right to hear the voice of the thousands of freemen in Pennsylvania, pledging themselves to obey the laws which they themselves have made. No strength of soldiery, no wealth of farms and factories, of railroads and coals, no perfection of governmental mechanism can save a faithless people from perishing. . . .

